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## Westar Energy to move 365 ton transformer.

Upgrade part of Topeka electricity grid modernization, customer reliability improvement.

Topeka, Kan., Feb. 21, 2014 — Motorists just south and west of Topeka might be taken aback this weekend when they see a 365-ton gigantic metal box moving quite slowly along county roads. The box is a transformer and just one element in electricity grid improvements Westar Energy is making to ensure customer reliability in the area.

“As the needs of our customers continue to grow and expand, we must ensure we have a power delivery system in place to provide safe, reliable service. Auburn Road was a dirt road when the previous substation was built in the 1950s,” said Doug Sterbenz, Westar Energy executive vice president and chief operating officer. “The electricity needs of the city and our customers have dramatically changed and our expectations for reliability have, too.”

The massive transformer (43 feet long, 24 feet wide and 30 feet tall) arrived by train in Pauline Wednesday afternoon. Thursday and Friday a trailer was built and the transformer moved to it for its Saturday trek to a substation on S.W. Auburn Road. It is part of the more than \$150 million investment Westar Energy is making to modernize the electrical grid that serves about 82,000 customers in Topeka and Shawnee County. The transmission line and substation projects will upgrade the infrastructure to meet the growth in demand for electricity and to ensure reliable service.

Transformers like the one destined for Auburn take electricity from high-voltage transmission lines (either 345 or 230 kilovolt) that cover long distances and reduce the voltage for transmission into the community at 115 kV. The transformer will be installed in a substation under construction near S.W. 37<sup>th</sup> and Auburn Road, which will replace a smaller nearby substation that was built in the 1950s. The new substation, scheduled to begin operation in June, is designed to allow for expansion during the next few decades.

Friday, the transformer was loaded on the trailer to begin its 10-mile journey early Saturday along county roads and conclude Sunday.

*If media members would like to have an on-camera interview and get footage of the move, please call the media line at 1-888-613-0003.*

- 30 -

Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE: WR) is Kansas' largest electric utility. For more than a century, we have provided Kansans the safe, reliable electricity needed to power their businesses and homes. Every day our team of professionals takes on

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projects to generate and deliver electricity, protect the environment and provide excellent service to our nearly 700,000 customers. Westar has 7,200 MW of electric generation capacity fueled by coal, uranium, natural gas, wind and landfill gas. We are also a leader in electric transmission in Kansas. Our innovative customer service programs include mobile-enabled customer care, a smart meter pilot project and paving the way for electric vehicle adoption. Our employees live, volunteer and work in the communities we serve.

For more information about Westar Energy, visit us on the Internet at <http://www.WestarEnergy.com>. Westar Energy is on Facebook: [www.Facebook.com/yourwestar](http://www.Facebook.com/yourwestar) and Twitter: [www.Twitter.com/WestarEnergy](http://www.Twitter.com/WestarEnergy).

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